DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 305 576 CG 021 587

TITLE The Cutting Edge: R & D Products Serving At-Risk Youth--2. Special Topic Issue.
INSTITUTION Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast & Islands, Andover, MA.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE Oct 88
CONTRACT 400-86-0005
NOTE 27p.
PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Dropout Prevention; *Educational Environment; Educationally Disadvantaged; Elementary School Students; Elementary Secondary Education; *High Risk Students; Research and Development; Secondary School Students; *Skill Development

ABSTRACT

Research reports and program descriptions for serving at-risk youth are summarized in this document. For each report or description, a one-page summary is provided. Six summaries are provided on the topic of meeting/recognizing diversity in today's students; eight summaries on the topic of keeping students in school; four summaries on the topic of building student skills; and four summaries on the topic of establishing a good school climate. (ABL)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

JANET ANGELIS

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

# THE CUTTING EDGE: R&D PRODUCTS
## SERVING AT-RISK YOUTH - 2

**Meeting/Recognizing Diversity in Today's Students**

1. *Achieving Quality Integrated Education* by Willis D. Hawley and Susan J. Rosenholtz (NEA Professional Library)
2. *Breaking Through: Portraits of Winners* (The NETWORK, Inc.)
3. *Kids Accepted Here: Activities for the Classroom* (The NETWORK, Inc.)
4. *The Report Card Series* (The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity)
5. *School Performance, Status Relations, and the Structure of Sentiment: Bringing the Teacher Back In* by Karl L. Alexander, Doris R. Entwisle, and Maxine S. Thompson (Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools)
6. *A Statement on Improving Schooling for Students from Diversified Language and Cultural Backgrounds* by Patricia Milazzo (The Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education)

**Keeping Students in School -- Ideas and Programs**

7. *Curricula and Programs for Drug and Alcohol Education* by Patricia S. Anderson, S. Lynn Fox, and Jennifer R. Salmon (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory)
8. *Dropout Prevention in Appalachia: Lessons for the Nation* (Appalachian Regional Commission)
9. *Good Beginnings for Young Children* by Janet M. Phlegar and *Home and School as Partners* by Paul Haley and Karen Berry (The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands)
10. *Strategies for Dropout Prevention* by Larry F. Guthrie, Claudia Long, and John R. Mergendoller (Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development)
11. *Students at Risk: A Review of Conditions, Circumstances, Indicators, and Educational Implications* by Harriet Doss Willis (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory)
12. *Success for At-Risk Students* (Teach'em, Inc.)
13. *Toward an Integrated Theory of School and Family Connections* by Joyce Epstein (Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools)
14. *What to Do About Youth Dropouts? A Summary of Solutions* by Margaret Terry Orr (Hispanic Policy Development Project)

**Building Student Skills**

15. *Building Basic Skills: The Dropout* by James M. Weber and Cindy Silvani-Lacey (The National Center for Research in Vocational Education)
16. *A Comprehensive Cooperative Learning Approach to Elementary Reading and Writing* by Nancy Madden, Robert Stevens, and Robert Slavin (Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools)
17. *KEA-AEL Tips for Teaching Marginal Learners* (Appalachia Educational Laboratory)
18. *R&D Interpretation Service Mathematics Bulletins* by Jean Sealey (Appalachia Educational Laboratory)

**Establishing a Good School Climate**

19. *An Assessment of a Delinquency Prevention Demonstration with Both Individual and Environmental Interventions* by Denise C. Gottfredson (Education Research Dissemination Office)
20. *An Examination of Student Discipline Policy in Three Middle Schools* by John DeJung and Kenneth Duckworth (Center for Educational Policy and Management)
21. *Building Commitment among Students and Teachers* by William A. Firestone, Sheila Rosenblum, and Arnold Webb (Research for Better Schools)
22. *Effective Secondary Schools* appearing in "Reaching for Excellence: An Effective Schools Sourcebook" by Thomas Corcoran (Research for Better Schools)

*This volume of* ***The Cutting Edge: R&D Products*** *was originally prepared by The Regional Laboratory for the Virgin Island's Department of Education. The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands performed this work under contract number 400-86-0005 of the U.S. Education Department's Office of Educational Research and Improvement. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views of The Laboratory, the Department, or any other agency of the U.S. Government.*

# Traditional School Arrangements Work Against Equity and Goals of Desegregation

Quality integrated education is most likely to occur in schools where students of different races have ample opportunity to get to know one another and where everyone is accepted equally, regardless of academic ability.

But the chances of that happening in schools that rely on organizational arrangements such as ability grouping, tracking, and whole group instruction are small. Stratified learning groups rarely give students occasion to interact with others outside their own immediate group. Moreover, such arrangements make it easy for students to compare academic abilities and socially disassociate themselves from those in lower ability groups.

These findings, published by the National Education Association, are drawn from a review of over 1,000 research studies on student achievement and school desegregation by Willis D. Hawley and Susan J. Rosenholtz.

Hawley, of Vanderbilt University, and Rosenholtz, from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, maintain that "When higher achieving students work with lower achieving classmates, the achievement benefits accrue primarily to both; and when lower achieving classmates work together in a group without higher achievers' assistance, achievement benefits accrue to none."

In other words, according to Hawley and Rosenholtz, there is no trade-off between equity and quality in desegregated education. Minority students achieve more in desegregated schools than in segregated ones, and white students' achievement is not adversely affected in desegregated classrooms and schools.

The researchers also found that the more integrated human relations programs were with other activities, and the less obvious these programs were, the more integration was likely to be achieved.

**Source**

*Achieving Quality Integrated Education* is available from the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516 (36 pages; $3.95 NEA members, $7.79 nonmembers).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Successful Latino Adults Talk to Youth about Benefits of Education and World of Work

Five Latino adults, all credible role models for high school youth and young adults exploring the world of work, talk about their lives and careers in a videotape developed by The NETWORK, Inc.

None of the five individuals is a super achiever, yet each enjoys a career that is far more successful than he or she ever thought possible. They work in fields as varied as law enforcement, high tech, and education.

To young people who must conquer the obstacles of poverty, cultural differences, and language barriers, these people communicate optimism, sincerity, and hope. Their message is about the importance of finishing high school, mastering English, and waiting for the right time before beginning a family. Says one, "You definitely have to work for what you want. Because you are Hispanic, it doesn't mean you have to keep yourself isolated. You have as much chance as anyone else in the United States."

Included with the video is an 80-page guide for discussion leaders with units on career exploration; nontraditional careers; job discrimination; and family, marriage, and careers. Both the videotape and the guide are available in English or Spanish versions.

**Source**

*Breaking Through: Portraits of Winners* is available from The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main Street, Andover, MA 01810 (30-minute videotape and 80-page guide, $150.00 plus $2.50 shipping and handling. All orders from individuals must be prepaid. Orders from institutions must be accompanied by purchase order. Available in 1/2" or 3/4" tape. Indicate English or Spanish version.) A free brochure is also available.

For your convenience, an order form has been included at the back of this booklet.

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Activities for Kids Teach Acceptance and Trust

Placing special needs students into regular classrooms can cause discomfort and even classroom disruption. But what seems like a potential problem can be turned into an opportunity for students to get to know one another better with a resource book developed by The NETWORK, Inc. in cooperation with Amesbury, Massachusetts, Public Schools.

*Kids Accepted Here: Activities for the Classroom* is a compendium of 27 classroom activities designed to create a classroom climate where all students are accepted, supported, and trusted. By allowing students to explore and express their feelings, and to get to know and understand their classmates, children learn that although differences among people exist, people are more alike than they are different.

The activities were developed primarily for students in kindergarten through fourth grade. Examples include lessons in which children utilize their strengths and increase their sense of self-worth by teaching a classroom lesson on something they do particularly well; build a vocabulary for differences and feelings by playing word games with a tape recorder; and increase their awareness of feelings of exclusion and rejection by role playing.

Each activity is described with a purpose statement, appropriate grade level, procedures that explain how to set up and carry out the activity, information on time, space, and materials requirements, and any special considerations that should be taken into account before the activity begins.

**Source**

*Kids Accepted Here: Activities for the Classroom* is available from the Publications Department,The NETWORK, Inc., 290 South Main St., Andover, MA 01810 (37 pages, $7.50 plus $2.50 postage and handling). Cite order no. 509-22.

For your convenience, an order form has been included at the back of this booklet.

# Education Gets Failing Grade in Sex Equity

More than a decade after passage of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, sex bias and discrimination remain pervasive at all levels of education.

One result is that both boys and girls are being kept from achieving their full potential. Girls tend to be invisible members of the classroom, receiving fewer academic contacts, less praise, and fewer complex and abstract questions. Boys, on the other hand, are far more likely to be identified as exhibiting learning disabilities, reading problems, and mental retardation.

At the university level, female students receive 28 percent less in grant awards and 16 percent less in loans than males. And the discrimination continues into the workplace. A male college graduate can anticipate earning $329,000 more than a male who graduates from high school. In contrast, a female college graduate is likely to earn only $142,000 more than a female high school graduate.

A modest upswing has occurred in the representation of women in principalships, but this comes after nearly a fifty year decine. In 1928, 55 percent of principals were women. By 1978, women held only 18 percent of these positions. The figures turned upward in 1981, when female representation had climbed to 23 percent. The number of women in other administrative positions is growing as well, albeit slowly. In the early 1970s, only three percent of associate, deputy, and/or assistant superintendents were women. A decade later, this figure had climbed to nine percent.

These findings and others are being distributed by The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity in a series of five "report cards" summarizing research on the extent of sex bias in education. Topics include: sex bias in colleges and universities; sex bias in mathematics, computer science and technology; women in educational administration; education and the teenage pregnancy puzzle; and gifted girls: the disappearing act.

Source

The "report card" series is available from The Mid-Atlantic Center for Sex Equity, the NETWORK, Inc., 1920 L. Street, NW, Suite 202, Washington, DC 20036. Please make checks payable to The NETWORK, Inc. ($2.50 for the set of five "report cards" or $1.00 if ordered individually).

For your convenience, an order form has been included at the back of this booklet.

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Lack of Common Background Among Teachers and Students Can Pull Down Achievement

Studies on the relationship between students' socioeconomic status (SES) and achievement have been around for a long time. But a team of researchers from the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools has examined how teachers' SES influences student achievement. Their findings suggest that although not all teachers are equally given to status related biases, when teachers from high SES backgrounds are assigned to low SES classrooms, the resulting "status mismatch" can produce negative effects on student achievement.

Researchers Karl L. Alexander, Doris R. Entwisle, and Maxine S. Thompson monitored the achievement of first grade students in 20 elementary schools and found that black students who began first grade testing at the same levels as white students fell noticeably behind by year's end and that pupil performance was most driven down where teachers who were "distant and disaffected."

According to Alexander, Entwisle, and Thompson, "High status teachers who are out of their element and lack a background of common experience with their students may find it exceedingly difficult to form a bond of common identity -- this is precisely the sort of situation that lends itself to stereotyped response patterns, and these, in turn, are thought to be the foundation of negative teacher expectancy effects."

High SES teachers in low SES settings, say the researchers, tend to have different standards for student behavior than parents, perceive their students as immature and generally lacking the personality characteristics that make for a "good student," have lower performance expectations for students, and evaluate the school climate much less favorably than teachers working with students in a status group more similar to their own.

**Source**

*School Performance, Status Relations, and the Structure of Sentiment: Bringing the Teacher Back In* is available from the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, The Johns Hopkins University, 3505 N. Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218 (44 pages, $3.90).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Researcher Gives Insight into Improving Schooling for Non-English Speaking Students

As the number of students with only a limited English-speaking ability grows, so does the potential dropout problem. Nevertheless, some clues to solving the dilemna exist. Patricia Milazzo of SWRL Education Research and Development reviews six promising approaches to improving schooling for students from diversified language and cultural backgrounds. Among them she cites (1) curriculum improvements such as aligning the English curriculum so that it takes advantage of proficiencies that students already have in their native language; (2) revising teachers' and administrators' credentialling requirements to develop larger numbers of teachers and administrators from the same ethnic heritage as students; (3) establishing work experience programs that show promise for retaining potential dropouts; (4) creative academic schooling alternatives leading to a GED or some other high school equivalency diploma; (5) developing new high school continuation programs with smaller classes for children who are experiencing difficulties in regular classrooms; and (6) instituting strong parent and community programs to decrease one of the most critical problems that schools face — high absenteeism.

Source

*A Statement on Improving Schooling for Students from diversified Language and Cultural Backgrounds* was prepared by Patricia Milazzo for The Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education. It is available free of charge from SWRL Educational Research and Development, 4665 Lampson Ave. , Los Alamitos, CA 90720.

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Directory for Western States Lists Programs and Curricula To Fight Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Half of all adults and students are affected by a family member or friend's abuse of alcohol or drugs. The problem has become so widespread that it is impossible for schools to ignore.

To help local school districts in the western states develop programs they can tailor to the problems of their area, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory has put together a directory of 111 curricula, programs, and other resources, along with a guide to evaluating these materials. The directory was developed by Patricia S. Anderson, S. Lynn Fox, and Jennifer R. Salmon.

Choosing a drug and alcohol education curriculum to address the problem is time consuming and more complex than selecting other curricula because it deals with the personal experiences of teachers and students and with community norms, the researchers say. School efforts to educate students also should be tied in to community efforts, and along with teachers the curriculum selection committee should include students, parents, and community members.

When evaluating a curriculum or program, the authors suggest that educators question whether it is based on recent research, whether its goals are clearly defined and in line with community values, and whether its materials fit into the existing curriculum. They also should ask whether it has been field tested, is cost effective, and provides training for teachers.

The guide provides a description of programs, their cost, and other information educators may find useful. One program for junior high students, for example, has a version of "Hollywood Squares" and crossword puzzles to present information on alcohol and its effects. The program costs $3.42 for a teacher's guide and instructional materials, and 8 cents for a student book.

Other programs are more elaborate and more expensive. One eight-hour program for parents of preteens and teenagers that helps them learn about substances and the family's role in building a child's self-esteem costs $495 a person. And a multi-media curriculum on drug information for grades K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12 costs as much as $7,250.

Source

*Curricula and Programs for Drug and Alcohol Education* is available from the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 101 S.W. Main St., Suite 500, Portland, OR 97204 (cite order no. NL-388-NE, 72 pages, $11.40 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Strong Local Organization and Community Involvement Stem School Dropout Rate

Calling the high rate of school dropouts a "national tragedy," the Appalachian Regional Commission maintains that its identification of practical, inexpensive ways to address the problem "can have promising implications not only for Appalachia, but for the nation."

Some Appalachian counties have dropout rates as high as 50 percent — more than double the national average.

Successful efforts to keep young people in school, according to the ARC, all share "certain common themes," the most important of which is strong local organization and extensive community involvement.

At the same time, however, the ARC cites a significant lack of community awareness of the dropout problem. Most respondents to an ARC-sponsored survey believe the dropout rate in their community to be less than 10 percent. Up to 70 percent were not aware of any dropout prevention programs in their community or state. Parents were most often cited as being to blame when their children dropped out of school.

"Experience in Appalachian communities indicates that when community leaders and concerned citizens are made aware of the problem, solutions begin to take shape," says the report.

**Source**

*Dropout Prevention in Appalachia: Lessons for the Nation* is available from the Appalachian Regional Commission, Suite 700, 1666 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20235 (16 pages, free).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Identifying At Risk Children And Involving Parents Early Prevent Later School Failure

Research on dropouts points to the benefits of reaching children at risk of failure as early as possible. Studies have shown, for example, that by the end of third grade, it is possible to predict which students eventually will drop out of school.

Identifying children at risk early in their school years is the focus of a resource packet by Janet M. Phlegar of The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands. The packet gives a brief overview of the issues, examples of 16 early identification and intervention programs and practices, and a bibliography.

Issues related to identifying and helping at-risk children are complex, and many are surrounded by controversy. One issue, for example, is parent involvement. Research shows parent involvement is a critical factor in the educational success of young children and suggests that school systems develop ways to encourage parents to help their children learn.

A second publication from the laboratory, this one by Paul Haley and Karen Berry, discusses the home and the school as partners in childrens' learning. Haley and Berry explain, for example, that parents can be involved in their children's schooling in different ways. Parents can be supporters of school activities by helping raise funds or chaperoning field trips; they can be learners who attend educational meetings and workshops; they can be home tutors; and they can be advocates to organize meetings, write letters, or monitor special programs.

The booklet also sets out some simple planning tips schools can use to get their parent involvement activities going. Survey community attitudes and interests, the booklet suggests. Also, it says, school districts might consider targeting programs to different audiences and needs. Highlighting parent involvement in newsletters, news articles, and recognition programs is another good idea.

"Research allows us to identify readily the parent and family factors that contribute to making a child at risk. Research also allows us to identify those meaningful and important ways that parents and families can contribute to children's educational success. The school must look to parents as resources, and it must consider creative methods for reaching out and addressing the needs of at-risk youth within the contemporary family structure," Haley and Berry conclude.

**Source**

*Good Beginnings for Young Children: Early Identification of High-Risk Youth and Programs that Promote Success* (No. 9504) and *Home and Schools as Partners* (No. 9505) are available from The Regional Laboratory, 290 S. Main St., Andover, MA 01810, $2.25 each plus $2.50 postage and handling per order, prepaid.

For your convenience, an order form has been included at the back of this booklet.

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Successful Dropout Programs Identify At-Risk Pupils Early And Get Dropouts Back in Class

Every day, about 3,000 students drop out of school. Dropouts cost the country $75 billion a year in lost tax revenues and increased welfare payments. Corporations must spend an additional $25 billion a year on remedial and literacy training.

But some schools have introduced successful programs to stop students from dropping out. Thirteen profiles of such programs form the heart of a report by Larry F. Guthrie, Claudia Long, and John R. Mergendoller of the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development.

Identifying at-risk students can begin in elementary school. An elementary school in Carson City, Nevada, has a Student Intervention Team composed of the school counselor and six volunteer teachers. The team meets weekly to discuss strategies for helping individual students, who are monitored through weekly progress reports.

And an elementary school in Los Angeles motivates pupils to attend classes the old-fashioned way: by rewarding good attendance with treats.

Students who fail their freshman year at a high school in Phoenix can voluntarily sign a contract to attend four core classes with the goal of becoming "Juniors by June." Such contracts, sometimes made with parents as well, are a common feature of many of the programs.

Two school districts in Tucson have teamed up with private business to get dropouts instruction in coursework and decisionmaking. The program also provides part-time employment.

Pregnant students--820 high school dropouts give birth every day--can get prenatal and other services at a program in Phoenix that allows them to remain in school or return to classes.

On the basis of recommendations from needs assessment meetings held last year in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah, the Far West Lab developed six projects that responded to some of these problems. These projects focus on a regional resource center; school-business partnerships, especially in urban school districts; school-based intervention programs; special instructional programs; an intensive early intervention program; and programs to improve the school performance of rural students.

**Source**

*Strategies for Droput Prevention* is available from the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94103 (cite order no. FW-288-NE, $3.95 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Dropout Prevention Should Begin In Preschool and Involve Home As Well as School Resources

Dropout prevention must start as early as preschool and continue throughout the "at-risk" child's elementary and secondary school experience, states Harriet Doss Willis in a new report published by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

"Preschool enrichment must begin in the home by providing parents with the knowledge and resources to help their children," says Doss Willis. Strengthening the educational content of day care centers and preschools, and allowing young parents to continue their own educations while simultaneously involving them in their children's learning, are also extremely important, she maintains.

At the primary level, Doss Willis recommends restructuring education, and particularly instruction in the basic skills, so that it takes place in "an environment that is not oppressive." She cites peer teaching and cooperative learning as two approaches that have been found to work well for low performing students.

To keep secondary school students in school, Doss Willis suggests that schools link education and part-time employment; use basic skills instruction to stimulate student's knowledge of the world; and make greater efforts to coordinate their efforts with students' families, youth service providers, and the business community.

**Source**

*Students at Risk: A Review of Conditions, Circumstances, Indicators, and Educational Implications* is available from the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, Clipboard Dissemination Program, 295 Emroy Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126 (37 pages, $6.50).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Pressing Social Needs Place Schooling for At-Risk Children on Nation's Political Agenda

Our very society is at stake unless policymakers and practitioners push for comprehensive strategies that will improve education for at-risk children, researcher Larry Cuban of Stanford University told a gathering of over 800 educational leaders at a conference sponsored by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

"Socioeconomic and educational conditions for at-risk students are getting worse. We are becoming, if we are not already, a two-tiered society," said Cuban.

Very often, he continued, political decisions govern the targets of reform. "When public officials and policymakers are pressed to deal with intractable social ills, they frequently turn to the schools as an acceptable and long-term political solution rather than a direct attack on the sources of the problem. Thus, when schools for the poor, children of color, and immigrants become popular targets for reform, you can bet with confidence that public officials have moved schooling higher on their agendas because of pressing national ills."

Among Cuban's recommendations for improvement were placing more emphasis on early childhood, giving teachers and principals more say in the educational process, and focussing reforms at the elementary school level where the structure is more amenable to change.

In addition to remarks by Cuban, 13 other presentations and panel discussions addressed needed improvements for at-risk students in school policies, classroom instruction, and student services. Speakers included John Porter, Edgar Epps, James Catterall, Floretta Dukes McKenzie, Harold Hodgkinson, and others.

**Source**

Audio cassettes of the "Success for At-Risk Students" conference presentations are available from Teach 'em, Inc., 160 E. Illinois St., Chicago, IL 60611. Write for a listing or phone 1-800-225-3775 (14 tapes, $10.00 each).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Parent-Teacher Relationships Influence Student Development And Motivation to Learn

Teachers and parents have similar goals for children's development.

"Teachers have a stake in the child's manners, behavior, and treatment of others, just as they have a stake in the student's academic skills and improvement. Parents have a stake in the child's mastery of basic skills and experiences with advanced skills, just as they care about the child's social and emotional skills development," says Joyce Epstein of the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools.

The stronger the interplay between the two, Epstein argues, the higher the student's motivation to succeed.

The manipulable variable in all this, Epstein contends, is parent involvement. "At any time, in any school, and in any family," she says, "parent involvement is a variable that can be increased or decreased by teachers, administrators, parents, and students. Each member of the school and family organizations can act to include or exclude parents from their children's education."

The message for educators is that teachers need to constantly update parents' understanding and involvement in school practices. "If teachers do not utilize the home as an ally of the school, part of the child's total educational and socializing environment ... is ignored," Epstein concludes.

**Source**

*Toward an Integrated Theory of School and Family Connections* is available from the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, Johns Hopkins University, 3505 North Charles St., Baltimore, MD 21218 (56 pages, $5.00 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Successful Dropout Programs Serve as Models for Communities Still Searching for Solutions

A local foundation in Detroit, Michigan, organizes potential high school dropouts into peer-counseling groups. In Atlanta, Georgia, business volunteers serve as mentors to low achieving high school juniors and and seniors. And the State of Washington offers migrant students who must work during regular school hours evening classes and transfers the credits back to their home schools in other states and elsewhere in Washington.

In short, schools, service agencies, and businesses across the country are mounting a variety of collaborative projects to keep students from dropping out of school.

Margaret Terry Orr describes 14 of these model approaches in a publication produced by the Structured Employment/Economic Development Corporation (SEEDCO).

"Each program summary...offers some insight into what ought to be considered for program adaptation or incorporation, in whole or in part," says Orr.

After her review, Orr recommends that programs to stem school dropout contain four features:

o Programs should be kept small to facilitate an intimate and supportive environment for students and a collegial relationship among staff.

o Instruction should include basic skill remediation, employment preparation, and job training to assist students both in graduating from high school and in preparing for post-high school employment.

o Academic instruction and experiential learning, such as employment training, should be mixed to reinforce each other.

o Programs should be structured to help students cope with social, economic, and other problems that are barriers to their continued education, either directly or through referral.

**Source**

*What To Do About Youth Dropouts? A Summary of Solutions* is available from the Hispanic Policy Development Project, Suite 310, 1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (cite order no. HP-987-NE, 31 pages, $5 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Basic Skills Enhance Success Of Vocational Education

Vocational training that incorporates a strong basic skills component offers potential dropouts the most opportunity to succeed in high school, say investigators at The National Center for Research in Vocational Education at The Ohio State University.

James Weber and Cindy Silvani-Lacey assembled data from 19 studies on the dropout problem and found that while the average basic skills performance of potential and actual high school dropouts hovered at about the fifth grade level, these skills increased substantially when mathematics and language instruction were combined with vocational training. Among their recommendations for developing a program especially suited for potential dropouts, the researchers urge:

- spelling out the structure, goals, and instruction so that students understand them;
- identifying potential dropouts early;
- developing and evaluating programs with separate presecondary and secondary components;
- utilizing individualized instruction materials and techniques;
- increasing overall effectiveness by integrating other support services into the student's program.

Weber and Silvani-Lacey also found that the basic skills levels of students in different vocational programs varied significantly. Students enrolled in business generally performed higher than did students enrolled in agriculture, health, technical, and trade and industrial programs. The basic skills achievement of these latter students, however, generally surpassed that of students enrolled in distributive education and home economics.

**Source**

*Building Basic Skills: The Dropout* by James M. Weber and Cindy Silvani-Lacey is available from The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, National Center Publications, Box R37, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1090 (order no. RD236, 58 pages, $5.75).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Reading and Writing Program Boosts Skills of Third and Fourth Grade

An evaluation by researchers at the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools has found that a comprehensive cooperative learning approach to reading and writing produces higher scores for third and fourth graders on standardized achievement tests of reading comprehension, reading vocabulary, language expression, and spelling.

Researchers Nancy Madden, Robert Stevens, and Robert Slavin also found that these students get more favorable ratings for organization of their writing, compared to control group students.

The learning approach evaluated was CIRC -- Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition.

CIRC maintains and elaborates on teachers' direct instruction through the use of heterogeneous teams and team rewards. In reading, for example, students read stories to one another and discuss the stories to check each other's comprehension. They also complete word attack, vocabulary meaning, and spelling exercises together, practice reading comprehension exercises, and write in response to the materials that they read.

In writing, students act both as audiences and helpful critics for one another. The program provides frequent opportunities for students to examine their writing from another's point of view. Teammate assistance during content revision and editing helps students develop their ideas in writing and perfect their mechanics.

**Source**

*A Comprehensive Cooperative Learning Approach to Elementary Reading and Writing: Effects on Student Achievement* is available from the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools, The Johns Hopkins University, 3505 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218 (25 pages; $2.25 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Teachers Share Classroom Tips To Help Colleagues Instruct Marginal and At-Risk Learners

Last year the Appalachia Educational Laboratory and the Kentucky Education Association cosponsored two study groups of educators each organized to identify an educational problem of significant concern in the region and develop a product useful in alleviating the problem.

One of the study groups chose as its topic the effective teaching of marginal learners -- students who are at-risk, slow learners, underachievers, or who for some other reason are not succeeding in the regular classroom but yet do not "test low enough" to qualify for special education. After canvassing teachers from across the country for effective strategies, they developed their product, a booklet of practical and easy-to-implement tips for teachers to use in their classrooms.

The responses the teachers got from their colleagues were diverse. They ranged from tips on reorganizing classrooms and schedules to using peer tutoring and incorporating community resources.

For instance, one teacher reported that she pairs above average students with students who are working below class average. When the above average students finish their assignments, they help the below-average students finish theirs. Another teacher matches at-risk students with younger students. Making tutors out of at-risk students motivates them to master the task at hand, as well as boosts their sense of self-worth and accomplishment.

Not surprisingly, individualizing instruction turned out to be another popular strategy among teachers making special efforts to reach marginal learners. A number of teachers reported that they alter assignments to meet the ability levels of different students in their classrooms. Sometimes they give at-risk students shorter assignments so that, while the students still learn the required skills, they do not become frustrated by the length of time it takes to complete the assignment. Color-coding the assignments on the blackboard gives students the opportunity to become self-directed and frees up the teacher for other activities.

One elementary teacher suggested throwing a class party after completing instruction in a unit (forests, outspace, wildlife, etc.). Students can make up invitations, design decorations, make up games, and plan refreshments based on the things they learned about the topic.

And, say contributers to the booklet, teachers shouldn't overlook community resources. Church groups, the Foster Grandparent Program, and other volunteer organizations, as well as parents, are often ready to tutor marginal learners.

Source

*KEA-AEL Tips for Teaching Marginal Learners* is available from Appalachia Educational Laboratory, Resource Center, PO Box 1348, Charleston, WV 25325 (11 pages, $4 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Bulletins Provide Instructional Tips for Teaching Mathematics

Want to boost students' ability to solve mathematics problems? Design effective remediation programs? Gear instruction to individual learning differences?

Instructional tips on coping with these three common problems in mathematics instruction are contained in a series of bulletins provided by the Appalachia Educational Laboratory's R&D Interpretation Service.

Prepared by Jean Sealey, each bulletin provides research-based strategies that teachers can put to immediate use in their classrooms. For example, Sealey suggests that teachers break the problem-solving process down into four stages. This not only provides students with a way to think about the problem but also helps teachers identify where students are experiencing learning difficulties. She also discusses various roles teachers can play in the teaching of problem solving, depending on students' problem-solving abilities, and what teachers can do to incorporate features of an effective problem-solving program into mathematics instruction.

Among recommendations for designing effective remediation programs, Sealey reminds teachers to be accepting of student difficulties. "Remember that the students are usually aware of their difficulties. It is important that you establish an atmosphere of acceptance so that students will be free to respond," she says. Sealey also lists six questions that teachers can ask themselves to help identify the source of students' learning difficulties and gives examples of effective remedial techniques.

Tips on teaching to individual differences focus on determining students' levels of cognitive development and recognizing and instructing students with different cognitive styles. There is also a brief discussion of other differences that affect learning such as intelligence and motivation, sensory preferences, and preparation.

**Source**

Reprints of the R&D Interpretation Service mathematics bulletins, *Problem Solving, Remediation,* and *Individual Differences*, are available from the Publications Department, The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 So. Main Street, Andover, MA 01810 ($1.00 each or $2.50 for the set, plus $2.50 postage and handling per order). All orders must be prepaid.

For your convenience, an order form has been included at the back of this booklet.

# Secondary Schools Take Dual Approach to Delinquency Prevention

Most attempts to reduce student delinquent behavior consist of one of two approaches. Schools either provide direct services for high-risk youth, usually through individual academic and affective counseling, or they take a broader approach by creating an overall school environment that will make desired student behavior more likely.

In Charleston, South Carolina, however, secondary schools took both approaches simultaneously — and got some handsome results in retrun. These schools put in schoolwide organizational programs to enhance climate, student achievement, and transition to career and postsecondary education while targeting specific direct individual services to students identified as at-risk.

In this double-barrelled effort, they collaborated with researchers at the John Hopkins Center for Social Organization of Schools (CSOS), using the Center's organizational development process — called Program Development Evaluation — to develop, implement, and evaluate their improvement activities.

An evaluation of the project by Denise Gottfredson of CSOS shows the power of combining effective management, schoolwide interventions, and individual student services. Not only did the school implement their interventions reasonably well, but also the experimental schools, when compared to control schools, increased student commitment to school as indicated by rates of dropout, retention, graduation, and standardized achievement test scores. Students perceived an increase in the fairness of school rules, fewer suspensions, and less alienation. They also reported their schools to be safer.

**Source**

*An Assessment of a Delinquency Prevention Demonstration with Both Individual and Environmental Interventions* by Denise C. Gottfredson is available from the Education Research Dissemination Office, Center for Social Organization of Schools, The Johns Hopkins University, 3505 North Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218 (72 pages, $5.40).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Effective Discipline Protects Students and Corrects Misbehavior

Disciplinary policies that take steps to protect students and staff from unruly students while, at the same time, correcting student misbehavior when it does occur, are more effective than policies that rely on either protective or corrective measures alone. Integrated disciplinary policies are also more effective than policies where both protective and corrective measures exist, but operate separately.

John deJung and Kenneth Duckworth of the Center for Educational Policy and Management at the University of Oregon examined staff and staff reactions to student discipline policies in three middle schools. Their findings suggest that when one administrator is reponsible for student and staff protection but another is in charge of correcting student misbehavior, any strong enforcement of rules achieved by this division may be paid for with a weaker corrective program.

The researchers also found that the emphasis on protection was greater when teachers were involved in developing school discipline policy and when a large proportion of students came from low-income backgrounds. Teachers, in general, were most satisfied with school disciplinary policies when administators enforced rules strictly and consistently. Most teachers, in fact, took their cues from administrators: the more consistent the adminstrative enforcement of rules, the more consistent teachers' enforcement of rules.

**Source**

*An Examination of Student Discipline Policy in Three Middle Schools* by John deJung and Kenneth Duckworth is available from CEPM Publications, College of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403 (125 pages, $5.00).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098.*
*Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Solution to Complex Problem Of Improving City Schools Lies In Staff, Student Commitment

A simple solution to the complex problem of school improvement lies in the old-fashioned notion of commitment, according to three researchers at Research for Better Schools. After examining 10 urban school systems, they conclude that a joint demonstration of commitment by school administrators, teachers and students will solve many of the problems schools face. But all three groups must participate in order to make it work.

Specifically, teachers need a commitment in three areas: to the students, to teaching, and to the school. A combination of any two of these without the third just won't do, say William A. Firestone, Sheila Rosenblum and Arnold Webb.

Students need to demonstrate two kinds of commitment: to the school and to learning. Students who are committed just to the school, for instance, may loaf around and never get down to the business of learning.

Administrators must show their commitment to teachers and students by treating them both with respect. They also must send out the message that learning is the ultimate mission of the school. They need to support the school community by creating a decent physical environment, and finally, they must nurture the professional goals of the staff.

The message is that it takes a joint effort to turn things around. There can be no weak link.

To ensure success, the researchers outline a host of recommendations. For instance, administrators should get teacher input in school decisions that will affect them. This can be accomplished by holding staff meetings and by setting up a teacher advisory committee. The study also suggests that schools give students the support they need by hiring more counselors and career specialists.

At a time when many policymakers are looking for fancy solutions, these researchers argue that the basic, old-fashioned value of commitment can do more for a school than any complex proposal. And if a commitment is made consistently by administrators, teachers and students, great improvements can be achieved.

**Source**

*Building Commitment Among Students and Teachers: An Exploratory Study of 10 Urban High Schools* is available from Research for Better Schools, 444 North Third St., Philadelphia, PA 19123 (cite order no. RS-1287-NE, 123 pages, $29 prepaid).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

# Effective High Schools, Successful Organizations Share Common Traits

A caring school community where members adhere to a common set of core values is more importnat to successful high schools than the implementation of specific effective schools practices.

In a review of the research on effective secondary schools, Thomas Corcoran of Research for Better Schools identifies ten characteristics of high school organizational culture that are key to school effectiveness. These are: (1) high levels of trust; (2) high expectations; (3) cooperation and collegiality; (4) high levels of discretionary effort; (5) respect for student welfare; (6) a belief in improvement; (7) respect for teaching; (8) concern for the weakest members; (9) a sense of collective responsibility; and (10) careful use of time.

These traits, says Corcoran, are similar to those found in all successful organizations, not just schools.

Corcoran maintains that adopting this kind of organizational development aproach is particularly suited for high schools, whose structural complexity, a strong content orientation, disagreement about goals, and traditional patterns of thinking sometimes make change difficult.

"Raising standards, changing time allocations, or aligning curricula may be beneficial policies, but such policies may not create the sense of a shared moral order, the press toward excellence, or the collegiality characteristic of successful schools," says Corcoran.

Source

"Effective Secondary Schools" by Thomas Corcoran appears in *Reaching for Excelence: An Effective Schools Sourcebook* edited by R. Kyle. Copies are available from the Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 ($9.50, order 065-000-00-230-2).

*The Cutting Edge: R&D Products for Serving At-Risk Youth - 2 is provided by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main St., Andover, Mass 01810 (508) 470-0098. Permission to reprint is granted; please credit The Regional Lab.*

We have included an order form for all of those products listed in this publication that are available from The Regional Laboratory. *Please note:* Most of the publications described in **The Cutting Edge** are available from the organizations that produced them. Please see individual descriptions for ordering information.

**ORDER FORM**

***Please send me the following:***

| Qty | Order No. | Title | Unit price | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 401-22 | Breaking Through: Portraits of Winners | $150.00 | |
| | 509-22 | Kids Accepted Here | $ 7.50 | |
| | 433-22 | The Report Card Series (set of 5) | 2.50 | |
| | 9504-22 | Good Beginnings for Young Children | 2.25 | |
| | 9505-22 | Home and School as Partners | 2.25 | |
| | 9303-22 | R&D Interpr. Service Math Bulletins (set of 3) | 2.50 | |
| | postage and handling per order | | | $2.50 |
| | Orders from individuals and orders for less than $25.00 must be prepaid. | | | |

***Send to:***

_____

*NAME, POSITION*

_____

*ADDRESS*

_____

*CITY, STATE, ZIP*

The Regional Laboratory
290 So. Main Street, Andover, MA 01810

---

**ORDER FORM**

***Please send me the following:***

| Qty | Order No. | Title | Unit price | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 401-22 | Breaking Through: Portraits of Winners | $150.00 | |
| | 509-22 | Kids Accepted Here | $ 7.50 | |
| | 433-22 | The Report Card Series (set of 5) | 2.50 | |
| | 9504-22 | Good Beginnings for Young Children | 2.25 | |
| | 9505-22 | Home and School as Partners | 2.25 | |
| | 9303-22 | R&D Interpr. Service Math Bulletins (set of 3) | 2.50 | |
| | postage and handling per order | | | $2.50 |
| | Orders from individuals and orders for less than $25.00 must be prepaid. | | | |

***Send to:***

_____

*NAME, POSITION*

_____

*ADDRESS*

_____

*CITY, STATE, ZIP*

The Regional Laboratory
290 So. Main Street, Andover, MA 01810